

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TRIEST 00094 241425Z

44

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-15 OMB-01 SAJ-01 EB-07 TRSE-00 /078 W

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P 241110Z SEP 75

FM AMCONSUL TRIESTE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0434

INFO AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY

AMCONSUL ZAGREB PRIORITY

UNCLAS TRIESTE 0094

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR PBOR IT YO

SUBJ: FIRST PRESS REACTIONS TO REPORT OF ALLEGED

ITALIAN-YUGOSLAV AGREEMENT ON QTE ZONE B UNQTE

1. DETAILED ARTICLE PUBLISHED IN SEPTEMBER 23 EDITION OF ROME DAILY IL GIORNALE D ITALIA REGARDING AN AGREEMENT REPORTEDLY REACHED IN AUGUST BY GROUP OF ITALIAN AND YUGOSLAV NEGOTIATORS AND WHICH ITALIAN GOVERNMENT, ACCORDING TO ARTICLE, WILL SIGN IN NEAR FUTURE, IS FOCAL POINT OF INTENSIVE COVERAGE IN ALL LOCAL AND REGIONAL NEWS MEDIA. ARTICLE (FULL TEXT OF WHICH IS NOT AVAILABLE HERE ALTHOUGH LENGTHY EXERPTS PUBLISHED IN VARIOUS ACCOUNTS IN OTHER PAPERS) STATES THAT AGREEMENT (WHICH IT IDENTIFIES BY NUMBER) CALLS FOR ITALIAN RECOGNITION OF YUGOSLAV SOVEREIGNTY OVER QTE ZONE B UNQTE IN EXCHANGE FOR SOME YUGOSLAV CONCESSIONS ON DEFINITION OF BORDER NEAR GORIZIA AND ON PORT OF TRIESTE. AGREEMENT ALSO REPORTEDLY CONTAINS ECONOMIC PROVISIONS AND GUARANTEES FOR ETHNIC MINORITIES. ARTICLE NOTES THAT ITALIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY REFUSES TO CONFIRM OR DENY THE REPORT.

2. ALL LOCAL AND REGIONAL NEWS MEDIA THIS MORNING GIVE REPORT

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PAGE 02 TRIEST 00094 241425Z

PROMINENT FIRST PAGE COVERAGE. TRIESTE DAILY IL PICCOLO,

WHILE AVOIDING EXPLICIT EDITORIAL COMMENT GIVES ITS ARTICLE SUB-HEADLINE QTE ALARMING REVELATIONS OF A ROME NEWSPAPER UNQTE. AN ARTICLE BY ITS ROME CORRESPONDENT ON REACTIONS IN THE CAPITAL CARRIES THE OBSERVATION THAT THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT S QTE EMBARRASSED SILENCE UNQTE IN RESPONSE TO JOURNALISTS INQUIRIES QTE UNFORTUNATELY TEND TO CONFIRM THAT THE INFORMATION PUBLISHED BY THE GIORNALE D ITALIA IS ANYTHING BUT FALSE UNQTE.

3. IN ONLY EXPLICIT EDITORIAL COMMENT TO APPEAR IN REGIONAL PRESS THUS FAR, TRIESTE EDITION OF VENICE DAILY IL GAZZETTINO STATES THAT QTE REALISM TELLS US THAT THE 20 YEAR YUGOSLAV ADMINISTRATION HAS NOW CRYSTALLIZED AND RENDERED UNCHANGEABLE A CERTAIN FACTUAL SITUATION... ON THE OTHER HAND THERE ARE SENTIMENTS. AND IN THIS UNDOUBTEDLY PAINFUL MOMENT IT IS CERTAINLY THIS IRRATIONAL ELEMENT WHICH DOMINATES EVERY OTHER CONSIDERATION... TO EXPRESS A JUDGEMENT HOWEVER, IT IS NECESSARY TO HAVE THE CONFIRMATION OF THE ALLEGED AGREEMENT AND TO KNOW ITS SALIENT POINTS FROM THE ONLY SOURCE WHICH CAN GIVE THEM AUTHENTICITY - THE GOVERNMENT UNQTE. SIGNIFICANTLY, HOWEVER, EDITORIALIST, IN ACCOMPANYING ARTICLE, TAKES ISSUE WITH IL GIORNALE D ITALIA S CHARACTERIZATION OF YUGOSLAV CONCESSIONS AS MINOR AND STATES THAT QTE FROM INFORMATION RECEIVED IT APPEARS TO US THAT THE ALLEGED AGREEMENT CONTAINS MANY POSITIVE POINTS IN ITALY S FAVOR UNQTE. RACKMALES

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, AGREEMENTS, BOUNDARY DETERMINATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 SEP 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975TRIEST00094
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750331-0027
From: TRIESTE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750920/aaaaarhw.tel
Line Count: 88
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: RowellE0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 MAR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 MAR 2003 by MaustMC>; APPROVED <10 FEB 2004 by RowellE0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FIRST PRESS REACTIONS TO REPORT OF ALLEGED ITALIAN-YUGOSLAV AGREEMENT ON QTE ZONE B UNQTE
TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, IT, YO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006